Access
News on WorkSafeBC products, programs, and services
JUNE 2006

Quicker online transactions

Enjoy ease and convenience with Fast File and Pay

Now it's quicker and easier than ever to conduct your WorkSafeBC account transactions online. Fast File and Pay, the newest online service at **WorkSafeBC.com**, simplifies the online reporting and payment process. It allows employers who operate in a single classification to report payroll and pay premiums for the current reporting period without having to sign up for our full range of online services.

That means you can report your payroll for this quarter and make a payment in just a few simple steps, without having to log in to the web site with a user ID and password. And here's the best news: you can be in and out in less than five minutes.

All you need to report your payroll is your account number and payroll report ID. To make a payment, you'll just need your account number. You'll find both your payroll report ID and your account number in a box on the top right corner of the Employer's Remittance Form enclosed with this newsletter.

Simply go to **WorkSafeBC.com** and click on either "Report payroll" or "Make a payment." From there you can enter your payroll information and pay your premiums using your Visa or MasterCard (up to $5,000 per month per card). Print a confirmation and you're done.

If you're like most employers, your time is precious. Try Fast File and Pay this quarter and see just how easy it is to put the paperwork behind you.

Changes to registration policy

Starting January 1, 2007, WorkSafeBC's registration policy will change to reflect a retroactivity period of three years. That means, employers who don't register will be charged up to three years of retroactive premiums. (If there is evidence of willful non-compliance, additional charges may apply.)

By law, as soon as employers hire workers, they are required to register with WorkSafeBC and pay premiums to fund workers' compensation. Under our current policy, when an employer registers late, WorkSafeBC can charge premiums retroactively to January 1 of the previous year, even if the employer has had workers for a longer period.

But that will change when the new policy comes into effect. By increasing the period of retroactivity from one to three years, WorkSafeBC aims to increase registration compliance and foster a workers' compensation system that's more equitable for you and the other employers who fund it.

For more information, visit our web site at **WorkSafeBC.com** where you'll find an archived policy discussion paper called "Retroactivity Limits on Employer Registration Effective Dates."

WorkSafeBC annual report available online

WorkSafeBC has released its *2005 Annual Report and 2006–2008 Service Plan*. Selected highlights from the report include:

- WorkSafeBC had another strong year of financial performance in 2005, with a normal operating surplus of $474 million (compared with $303 million in 2004).
- The provincial injury rate increased slightly from 3.06 to 3.09 short-term disability claims per 100 person-years of employment.
- Average short-term claim duration was lower, while the successful return-to-work rate for injured workers was higher during the year.
- The aggregate employer premium rate stayed flat at $1.99 per $100 of assessable payroll — remaining among the lowest aggregate rates in Canada.

To view the annual report online, visit us at **www.worksafebc.com/publications/reports/annual_reports/default.asp**.

Reminder about new penalty structure

When you pay your premiums, you do your part to fund the workers' compensation system and ensure that workers are protected from financial hardship in the event of a workplace injury or illness.

To encourage employers to pay their fair share into the system, WorkSafeBC applies penalties to the accounts of employers who don't make their payments on time and in full.

As we've mentioned in past issues of *Access*, WorkSafeBC has introduced a new penalty structure. The minimum penalty has increased from $25 to $50. Depending on the amount you pay in quarterly premiums, the penalty for missing payments can range from $50 to $10,000.

That's a good incentive to report your payroll and make your payments by the due date — in this case, by July 20. A better incentive is the knowledge that you're contributing to a system that rewards safe work practices, offers competitive rates, and provides your employees with guaranteed coverage if they are injured at work.

For more information, see the complete penalty schedule on the back of your remittance form.

Policy changes feedback under review

The Policy and Research Division has been consulting the public since February 2006 to gauge opinion around proposed amendments to prevention and assessment policies. At the request of labour and employer stakeholders, the consultation period was extended by one month to June 9, 2006.

The proposed changes stem from the Board of Directors' Health and Safety Initiative. The goal of that strategy is to reduce serious injuries and fatalities in the workplace and address the changing nature of workplace relationships.

Stakeholders were invited to provide feedback on a package of policy discussion papers and draft policy items. Included in the package was a review of the policies on workplace status that define who is a worker, an employer, or an independent operator. The proposed changes will have a significant effect in industries where contracting out is common practice, such as transportation, construction, and forestry.

The Board of Directors will review stakeholder submissions over the summer and decide on the proposed changes later in the fall.

For more information on the consultation, visit us at **www.worksafebc.com/regulation_and_policy/policy_consultation/law_40_10_390.asp**.

Translated safety publications

WorkSafeBC now has occupational health and safety resources in Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Punjabi, Spanish, and Vietnamese. To order copies, visit **WorkSafeBCstore.com** and look under "Products" for "Translated Publications." You can also download online translated resources by visiting **WorkSafeBC.com** and looking under "Publications."

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This newsletter is also available electronically on the WorkSafeBC web site at **www.worksafebc.com/publications/newsletters/access/**.

Look for the next issue in September 2006.

WORK SAFE
WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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